



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE  
Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary  
113 Harbor Way, Suite 150  
Santa Barbara, CA 93109

June 7, 2010

Lieutenant Morgan Barbieri, Project Officer  
Docket Management Facility (M-30)  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
West Building, Ground Floor, Room W12-140  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington D.C. 20590-0001

**RE: Port Access Route Study off Los Angeles/Long Beach**

Dear Lieutenant Barbieri:

On behalf of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, I welcome the opportunity to comment on the United States Coast Guard's Port Access Route Study (PARS) for Los Angeles and Long Beach. The sanctuary is a federally protected marine area offshore Santa Barbara and Ventura counties with a congressional mandate to protect marine ecosystems and facilitate compatible use. The sanctuary is home to sensitive and productive coastal and marine habitats, supporting an enormous diversity of marine mammals, seabirds, fishes, and invertebrates, including endangered and threatened species. We support the Coast Guard's efforts to reduce the risk of marine vessel casualties along their routes as they approach the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles. The study also offers a unique and important opportunity to minimize risks to wildlife and sensitive areas such as the sanctuary.

In developing options to improve vessel transit safety, we specifically encourage the Coast Guard to: 1) assess and minimize risks associated with vessel transits, such as collisions and discharges, in and around the Sanctuary; 2) consider the capacity and efficacy of response teams and equipment in the region, and specifically in areas south of the northern Channel Islands where vessel traffic has increased recently; and 3) study alternative routing, varying ship speeds and other options to help reduce the risk of ship strikes on endangered whales.

We look forward to working with the Coast Guard to assist with the data collection and analyses necessary to address these issues. We also look forward to hearing more about the study throughout the process, and invite you to visit with our Sanctuary Advisory Council, as you have recently. We commend the Coast Guard for pursuing the PARS, and thank you for consideration of these comments. For questions or consultation with the sanctuary please contact: Todd Jacobs (805-884-1470; [todd.jacobs@noaa.gov](mailto:todd.jacobs@noaa.gov)) or Mike Murray (805-884-1472; [michael.murray@noaa.gov](mailto:michael.murray@noaa.gov)).

Sincerely,

*Mike Murray,*  
for

Chris Mobley, Superintendent